

## **General Health Status**

Peoples' self-perceptions of their health status can be significant predictors of morbidity and mortality among US populations. Self-rated health assessments can also serve as proxy measures for chronic conditions and burdens on health care delivery system. Since 1993, the BRFSS has asked respondents to answer questions in which they self-rate their health status. Then, they are asked to determine the number of recent days during which they felt they had poor physical health, the number of recent days they felt their mental health was poor, and the number of recent days their usual activities were limited by poor physical

### ***General Health is Fair or Poor***

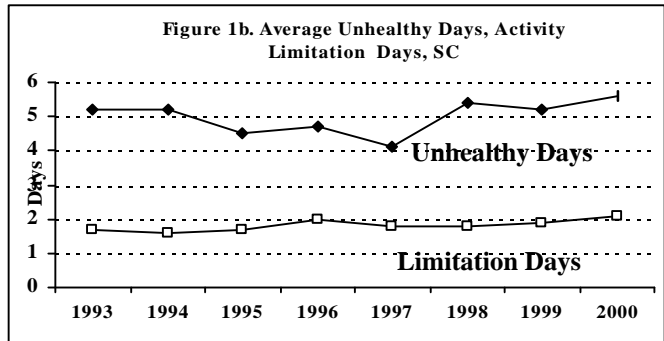
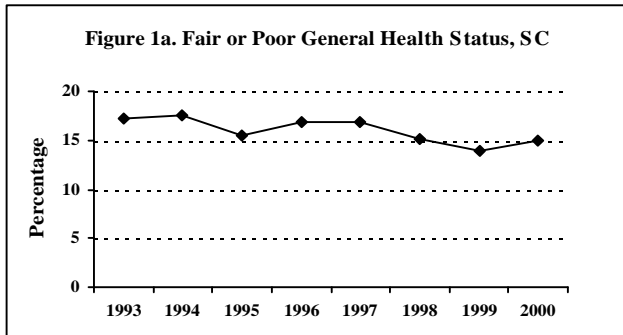
In 1993, approximately 17 percent of South Carolinians rated their health status as poor or fair. The prevalence of South Carolinians who rated their health status as poor dropped to 15 percent in 2000. Among the four race-sex groups, black women were the most likely to think of themselves as unhealthy, while white men were the least likely to rate their health status as poor or fair. Moreover, older adults, people with less education or lower family incomes, and those who were unable to work reported fair or poor general health status most frequently.

### ***Average Unhealthy Days During the Past 30 Days***

The BRFSS asked survey respondents to count the number of days within a 30-day period in which they felt that either their physical or mental health was poor. Over a 30 day period, whites reported 5.8 days of poor health, whereas blacks reported 5 days. White women reported a number of unhealthy days that was almost twice the number of days reported by black men. There were similarities in the numbers of self-reported unhealthy days and participants' family income, education levels, and employment status. BRFSS data shows that the average number of unhealthy days has increased since 1995, reaching its highest point of 5.6 days in 2000.

### ***Average Days of Activity Limitation Due to Poor Physical or Mental Health***

Finally, the BRFSS asked the survey respondents how many days over a 30-day period in which they limited their activities because of poor physical or mental health. South Carolinians restricted their usual activities due to a poor health status at an average of about 2 days per month in 2000, representing a slight increase since 1993. Men reported fewer days in which they were unable to perform their usual activities due to poor mental or physical health than did women. People with low income or less education reported more days in which their activities were limited than did their counterparts with higher income and education levels.

**Table 1. General Health Status, 2000**

|                          | General Health Fair or Poor |        |      | Average Unhealthy Days in Past 30 Days |        |      | Average Days of Activity Limitation in Past 30 Days |        |      |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|------|--|--------|------|---|--------|------|
|                          | %                           | 95% CI |      | Mean                                   | 95% CI |      | Mean  | 95% CI |      |
| <b>Overall</b>           | 15.0                        | 13.6   | 16.4 | 5.6                                    | 5.2    | 6.0  | 2.1   | 1.8    | 2.3  |
| <b>Sex</b>               |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| Male                     | 13.0                        | 10.9   | 15.1 | 4.4                                    | 3.8    | 4.9  | 1.7   | 1.4    | 2.1  |
| Female                   | 16.7                        | 14.8   | 18.6 | 6.8                                    | 6.2    | 7.3  | 2.4   | 2.1    | 2.7  |
| <b>Race</b>              |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| White                    | 14.2                        | 12.7   | 15.8 | 5.8                                    | 5.4    | 6.3  | 2.1   | 1.8    | 2.4  |
| Black                    | 17.4                        | 14.2   | 20.7 | 5.0                                    | 4.3    | 5.8  | 2.0   | 1.4    | 2.5  |
| <b>Race and Sex</b>      |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| White Male               | 12.8                        | 10.3   | 15.2 | 4.5                                    | 3.9    | 5.1  | 1.7   | 1.3    | 2.1  |
| White Female             | 15.7                        | 13.7   | 17.7 | 7.1                                    | 6.4    | 7.7  | 2.5   | 2.1    | 2.9  |
| Black Male               | 14.7                        | 9.9    | 19.4 | 3.9                                    | 2.8    | 4.9  | 1.7   | 0.9    | 2.6  |
| Black Female             | 19.5                        | 15.1   | 23.9 | 5.9                                    | 4.9    | 7.0  | 2.1   | 1.5    | 2.8  |
| <b>Age</b>               |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| 18-24                    | 4.1                         | 1.9    | 6.3  | 3.9                                    | 3.1    | 4.7  | 0.9   | 0.5    | 1.2  |
| 25-34                    | 9.3                         | 5.9    | 12.6 | 5.2                                    | 4.4    | 6.0  | 1.5   | 1.0    | 2.0  |
| 35-44                    | 9.3                         | 7.0    | 11.5 | 5.6                                    | 4.7    | 6.4  | 1.8   | 1.4    | 2.3  |
| 45-54                    | 16.4                        | 13.1   | 19.7 | 6.1                                    | 5.2    | 7.0  | 2.7   | 2.0    | 3.4  |
| 55-64                    | 22.2                        | 18.0   | 26.5 | 6.8                                    | 5.7    | 8.0  | 3.1   | 2.3    | 4.0  |
| 65 +                     | 31.1                        | 26.6   | 35.6 | 6.3                                    | 5.4    | 7.3  | 2.7   | 2.0    | 3.4  |
| <b>Education</b>         |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| <High School             | 38.1                        | 32.7   | 43.5 | 8.9                                    | 7.6    | 10.1 | 4.2   | 3.3    | 5.2  |
| HS graduate              | 16.4                        | 13.9   | 18.9 | 5.7                                    | 5.1    | 6.3  | 2.0   | 1.6    | 2.4  |
| Some College             | 9.1                         | 7.0    | 11.1 | 5.6                                    | 4.8    | 6.4  | 2.1   | 1.6    | 2.6  |
| College graduate         | 6.5                         | 4.7    | 8.3  | 3.8                                    | 3.3    | 4.3  | 1.1   | 0.8    | 1.3  |
| <b>House Hold Income</b> |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| <\$25,000                | 27.6                        | 24.1   | 31.1 | 8.6                                    | 7.7    | 9.5  | 3.8   | 3.2    | 4.5  |
| \$25,000-\$49,999        | 9.9                         | 7.9    | 11.9 | 4.8                                    | 4.2    | 5.3  | 1.5   | 1.2    | 1.9  |
| \$50,000-\$74,999        | 3.9                         | 2.0    | 5.8  | 4.0                                    | 3.2    | 4.7  | 1.2   | 0.8    | 1.7  |
| \$75,000+                | 5.1                         | 2.8    | 7.4  | 2.8                                    | 2.2    | 3.5  | 0.5   | 0.3    | 0.8  |
| <b>Employment</b>        |                             |        |      |  |        |      |   |        |      |
| Employed                 | 7.4                         | 6.1    | 8.7  | 4.1                                    | 3.7    | 4.5  | 0.9   | 0.8    | 1.1  |
| Unemployed               | 22.9                        | 13.2   | 32.7 | 9.8                                    | 7.6    | 11.9 | 4.7   | 2.7    | 6.6  |
| Others                   | 25.0                        | 21.7   | 28.3 | 6.1                                    | 5.3    | 6.8  | 2.4   | 1.9    | 2.9  |
| Unable to work           | 55.7                        | 46.9   | 64.6 | 20.8                                   | 18.5   | 23.0 | 13.7  | 11.3   | 16.1 |